



CONTRACTOR'S FORUM

"NEWS YOU CAN USE"

Volume VII

Issue 1

Contractors Newsletter

February 2005

CHECK OUT OUR NEW & IMPROVED WEB-SITE

Visit our website at www.danville-va.gov and see all of the advantages that it offers. Some of which would include:

1. Permit applications and permit fee schedules for building, electrical, mechanical and plumbing can be downloaded and/or sent via email to our office.
2. Information regarding obtaining Virginia State Contractor's License and Tradesman License.
3. The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code can be viewed to assist with any code concerns.
4. There is a listing of all current codes and links to their websites and also a page that outlines any current code changes.
5. Asbestos Certification and Exemption forms along with a Bond form that can be printed out for your convenience.
6. You can even submit a request for an inspection via email and also there is an online form to submit any Code related questions to the Building Official.

There are several other features that are available on the website, which would include:

1. Links to all e-mail addresses for the Inspections Division.
2. Lot plan information and the link to the current Zoning Code.
3. Link to the Danville City Code.
4. Link to the Real Estate Assessment website.
5. Online Vacant Home Catalog, where you can view unoccupied properties that are for sale.
6. Inspector Notes and code changes regarding pools.
7. Other valuable links:
 - Code questions
 - Housing & Development
 - Enterprises Zone information
 - Maintenance Code complaints



In an effort to serve our customers better we are always looking for ways to improve our "One-Stop Permitting" process. Some future features that will be available on our website are:

1. Applying and paying for permits online.
2. Checking status of plan reviews online.
3. All current and historical permit information will be available online.
4. Code changes to Uniform Statewide Building Code & International Codes.
5. Online application for 1 & 2 Family Dwelling plan review process.

BUILDING NEWS

Just a reminder that all commercial jobs require plans and must go through the plan review process before a permit can be issued. Such plans should be submitted to Randy Gentry, Development Coordinator, who in turn will assign a plan review to each department necessary. Once the plans have been approved, the permit can be issued and the work can begin.

COMMERCIAL



This process should eliminate code violations that would have to be corrected during construction, thus providing a more cost effective project. We look forward to working with you in 2005 to provide a *safe and accessible* building for the public.

RESIDENTIAL



NEW **PILOT PROGRAM** **Residential Plan Review**

The Inspections Division is in the process of creating a new plan review process for new one and two family dwellings. This review will also include additions to existing residential dwellings.

We are requesting your comments and assistance in this process. Please start using the enclosed “*Single Family Dwelling Plan Review*” form for your next building permit request, so we can start evaluating this procedure. If you have scaled drawings and/or construction plans for the project you are about to start, please submit these to us so we can review them. This will help us critique our process and be able to receive comments from you.

With your help, assistance and cooperation, I know we can make this transition very smooth. Just remember, this is just a pilot program to evaluate the process. Once the process has been refined, we will notify you again.

Thank you for your continued support of our office.

Jerry D. Rigney



CALLING ALL LICENSED CONTRACTORS

Pilot Program

The City of Danville Housing Division is in need of Class C contractors who are licensed to do building, electrical, plumbing and/or mechanical work. We will be accepting bids from Class C contractors on small rehabilitation projects. If you are interested in bidding, please contact the Housing Division Office.

Lead Supervisor's Course

A Lead Supervisor's training course is being planned for late February or early March free of charge. It is a four-day State Certified Course and will be offered in Danville. If you or any of your employees are interested in attending this training, please contact the Housing Division Office to sign-up. The date, time and location will be announced.

City of Danville
Housing & Development Division
Municipal Building
427 Patton St., Rm. 211
Danville, VA 24541
(434) 799-5260



REMOVING THE BLIGHT

Property Maintenance has been diligently working on removing blighted properties throughout Danville. Blighted properties affect everyone by creating an unsightly area for visitors and even reducing the value of property in the neighborhood. Several different approaches are being used in order to reduce the amount of blighted properties in Danville.

A vacant home catalog was created to assist homeowners in selling abandoned and vacant properties. Results from the vacant home catalog have been successful. Many homes have been purchased by homeowners with work underway on several of them. Other homes either have potential buyers or offers on them. In any case it has been a proven method to rid communities of blighted properties. Another approach is foreclosing on these properties. Several foreclosures have been completed and several more are in progress. This approach is being used mainly when the owners are deceased with no legitimate heirs. These foreclosures will allow a bidder to purchase the property with a clear title at a reasonable price so the money saved can go into repairs to the property.

These new and innovative approaches to rid blights, along with the enforcement of the Property Maintenance Code, have proven to be effective in improving our communities and neighborhoods.

THE PLUMBING POST



Another year has past and I hope it was a good one for you all. Here are a few notes I would like to share with you.

- The 2000 International Plumbing and Residential Codes call for large nail plates at the sole and top plates of all wood construction. If the plumbing pipes are behind a cabinet the small nail plates will be allowed.
- Because of the vacancy of the Plumbing Inspectors position, please call 24hrs in advance for your inspection needs.
- (Reminder) The Danville / Pittsylvania County Plumbing and Heating Organization meet every 3rd Thursday of each month. Flyers will be posted in every supply house and our office. Your opinions are welcome and needed. Help us become a stronger organization!
- The Virginia Plumbing and Mechanical Association will be meeting in January and February to discuss their positions for the upcoming code changes. You can view the proposed changes at www.vpmia.org. The Codes are scheduled to change in the Summer to Fall of 2005.
- Also I would like to invite you to check our web site. The address is www.danville-va.gov. You can e-mail us permit applications and contact any of our inspectors. On all commercial jobs please check with our office to see if the plan review has been approved.
- I would like to get the e-mail addresses of all the Plumbing Contractors. If you have one please send it to me at fulchcw@ci.danville.va.us.
- As you all know or if you don't the Electric rates will be increasing in July of this year. Please keep this in mind when you are talking with your customers. *One ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure*

I hope that this New Year will be prosperous and happy for all of you.



The Inspections Division would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the importance of scheduling final inspections. Article 115.4 of the *Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC)* requires the permit holder to assure all inspections are conducted. Violations of the USBC are violations of state law. Penalties, upon conviction for violations of the USBC shall be as set out in 36-106 of the *Code of Virginia*.

In the case where final inspections are not requested the permit remains open, and creates a “log jam” in our records. Some tips for making sure final inspections are scheduled and performed are as follows:

1. If you plan to be on a job and expect to finish that day, call in advance to have an inspector come by that day;
2. If more than one trade is involved in the job, try to coordinate all final inspections with the general contractor for the same day.

MECHANICAL NEWS



The Inspections Division of the City of Danville is requesting assistance in helping us provide you with timely, efficient inspections without delays and wasted time and effort. On many occasions, inspections are delayed or cannot be completed because of reasons such as: *property owners are not at home, ladders are not provided to access the equipment or the job is not fully completed.*

In an effort to help avoid such delays and re-inspection fees, we are requesting that you review the following checklist and see that these items have been met before requesting an inspection.

1. Has a permit been obtained for this work?
2. Has arrangements with the owner been made for accessibility into the building?
3. Does the inspector need any equipment such as ladders, test equipment, etc.?
4. Do I have a journeyman present on the job?
5. Have I double-checked the installation to insure that it is complete and complies with the code and manufacturer's installation instructions?

Following the above stated items should help to increase the inspections performed and provide better service to you and the public. Please be advised that a **\$27.50** re-inspection fee may be charged for each re-inspection that is required.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL

The following are some frequently asked questions and facts concerning land disturbance and Land Disturbance Permits:

What is a Land Disturbance Permit? *A Land Disturbance Permit is a permit that allows a person or company to legally engage in a land disturbing activity.*

What is a land disturbing activity? *A land disturbing activity is defined by the Department of Conservation and Recreation as “any land change which may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into state waters or onto lands in the Commonwealth”.*

When is a Land Disturbance Permit required? *Danville City Code requires that a Land Disturbance Permit be obtained when an area of land disturbance meets or exceeds 5,000 square foot. Usually, an Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Plan must be submitted for review and must be approved before the permit is issued.*

I’m cutting down some trees. Is that considered a land disturbing activity? *No. If trees are cut down but the stumps are to remain in place, this is not considered a land disturbing activity. If the stumps are to be excavated, and the area exceeds 5,000 sf, a Land Disturbance Permit is then required. Even if a permit is not required, it is still the responsibility of the landowner to keep the road clean where trucks or equipment may be exiting the site..*

I'm building a house. Do I still have to get a permit? *Yes. Instead of issuing Land Disturbance Permits for homebuilders, an “Agreement In Lieu Of Plan” is issued. This agreement basically means that the permit holder agrees install any controls that are necessary or as directed by the Program Administrator. A formal ESC Plan is usually not required.*

How much do these permits cost? *A Land Disturbance Permit cost \$75.00 for the first acre and \$50.00 for each additional acre. An “Agreement In Lieu Of Plan” cost \$50.00. In addition to obtaining the proper permit, a surety must also be posted.*

Why do I have to post a surety with the Land Disturbance Permit or with the “Agreement In Lieu Of Plan”? *The purpose of the surety is ensure that if a contractor neglects the Erosion and Sediments Control requirements, the City will have the funds to install and/or maintain the required measures. The amount of the surety is determined by an estimated cost of the required controls for that particular project.*

If you have any additional questions or if you need to obtain a Land Disturbance Permit, please contact Brian Dunevant at 799-5019 ext. 251.

